

City of Auburn, Maine

"Maine's City of Opportunity"

Conservation Commission

PARKS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, October 28, 2015 – Auburn Hall

Auburn's Conservation Commission Parks Subcommittee met on Wednesday, October 28, 2015. The meeting was called to order at 6:34pm in Auburn Hall by Committee Co-Chair Tizz Crowley. Present were Bob Sipe (Co-Chair), Misty Edgecomb, Larry Pelletier, and Chuck Lefean.

The group discussed and started to make revisions to DIVISION 3. - PARKS ADVISORYBOARD ordinance in order to make parks an ordinance separate from recreation. Chair Sipe documented the proposed changes.

Chair Sipe distributed a spreadsheet called: Park_Recreation_Open_Space_Spreadsheet.xlsx. The spreadsheet compiles all the information that was discussed at the Committee's first meeting on September 30, 2015 along with information from the city's website and the Androscoggin Land Trust. The spreadsheet has four tabs:

- City Owned Parks & Trails
- Non City Owned Parks & Trails
- Athletic Fields
- Playgrounds

Although this Committee's focus is on City owned parks, trails and cemeteries, the Committee felt that an inventory of all parks, trails, athletic fields and playgrounds was important.

Larry updated the group on the Parks Watch program. We need to promote this program to the public and to review recommendations and results based on this first year's experience. There are Q-Code signage in the park, but no one knew what to do if the person didn't have a smart phone. No one could confirm that there were working emergency call boxes in the park.

The Committee plans to look at the loitering ordinance, specifically to see if Parks safety can be improved.

The Committee briefly discussed the need for a Parks Facebook page.

Larry reported that we need to be sure the community knows the history of the Parks and the people for whom some Parks are named. This might be part of a future work plan. We may need to find a "Park Advocate" for each City Park.

Chair Sipe also discussed the city's website as it relates to parks. Everyone agreed that the 'Public Parks' link should also appear under 'Residents' and not just 'Visitors'. It was also noted that the 'Map It' feature on the website did not show all of the city parks. Chair Sipe also disturbed a screen printing of the entire 'Parks' website. The Committee agreed that almost all of the pictures on the

parks website are of playground equipment and that the website could be greatly improved with new pictures that better reflect the diverse recreational opportunities of Auburn's parks.

Chuck asked about the work plan for Mt. Apatite. This will be provided to the Committee at some future date.

Committee members complimented the work of John Wing, a City employee, who does a great job promptly addressing work orders related to Parks.

The Subcommittee members will plan to continue reviewing the current Parks ordinance(s) and will discuss and continue to make changes to the ordinance at the next meeting.

The Committee was enthusiastic and unanimous in support of establishing a permanent Parks Advisory Board- similar to the Community Forest Board. This Parks Advisory would be a standing subcommittee of the Conservation Commission.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Sipe

Acting recording secretary for the meeting.